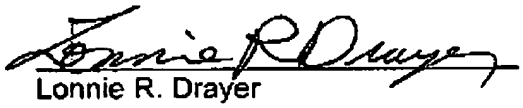
REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

The Examiner rejected claims 1 – 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as obvious over applicants' prior art admitted in the background section of the specification. The Examiner rejected claims 10 – 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over applicants' admitted prior art in view of Blackadder et al. (US 6267315). Claims 16 – 17 have been allowed.

Independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended to require that the frame and the lockbar are made of different materials and that each land portion of the edges of the cutouts present a relatively sharp edge such that as a load on the seat belt retractor frame increases during a crash of a vehicle the lands will penetrate the lockbar. There is no teaching or suggestion in either applicants' admitted prior art or Blackadder et al. of a seat belt retractor frame and a lockbar having structures to yield these claimed characteristics.

It is believed that all of the pending claims are now in form and condition for allowance and such action by the Examiner is respectfully urged.

Respectfully submitted,



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